



**PRESS RELEASE**  
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**For Immediate Release**

October 24, 2006

**DEFENDANT SENTENCED FOR ROLE IN  
CONSPIRACY TO OPERATE HOUSES OF PROSTITUTION IN TAMPA BAY AREA**

Tampa, FL - United States District Court Judge James D. Whittemore today sentenced JOSE RODRIGUEZ, age 57, to a sentence of three years' imprisonment, to be followed by a term of three years' of supervised release. He also imposed a fine on RODRIGUEZ of \$6,000. This defendant pled guilty on May 17, 2006 to a charge of conspiring to persuade and entice persons to travel in interstate commerce in order to facilitate the crime of prostitution.

According to the indictment and the plea agreement, the defendant owned and operated a number of houses of prostitution in the Tampa Bay area in the period between January, 2000 and October, 2005. These houses of prostitution, sometimes called "21 houses", catered to Hispanic clients and utilized the services of mostly Hispanic women who worked there as prostitutes. Many of these women came to the Tampa Bay area from other states or from outside of the United States to work at these

houses of prostitution and most of the prostitutes themselves were illegal aliens. This defendant was one of eleven persons named in an indictment which the United States filed in June, 2005.

This case was investigated by the United States Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement. It was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Jay L. Hoffer of the Tampa Division.